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TAGS: PGOV KDEM CG ELECTIONS
SUBJECT: NEW CABINET ANNOUNCED

¶1. (U) Summary. Ministerial appointments by DRC President Joseph Kabila and Prime Minister-designate Antoine Gizenga were announced the evening of February 5. The new cabinet will be very large, with a total of 60 members. While some of the new ministers represent the established Congolese political class, many of the appointees are relatively unknown. End summary.

¶2. (U) The February 5 announcement of the new Congolese cabinet, including six Ministers of State, 34 Ministers, and 20 Vice Ministers, has ended weeks of speculation and negotiation. A complete list of appointees is being sent septel.

¶3. (U) Nine members of the new cabinet are women. Thirteen members are from Bandundu, where Gizenga's PALU party is strongest. Katanga, Maniema, Equateur, and Bas-Congo provinces are each represented by eight members.

Ministers of State

¶4. (U) The six Ministers of State, a group of senior ministers, include Mobutu Nzanga, Agriculture; Denis Kalume, Interior, Decentralization and Security; Mbusa Nyamwisi, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Sylvain Ngabu, Higher Education; Pierre Lumbi, Infrastructure, Public Works and Reconstruction; and Nkulu Mitumba Kilombo, Minister of State in the Presidency.

Ministers

¶5. (U) Appointees in some key ministries include: Chikez Diemu, Defense; Georges Minsay, Justice; Athanase Matenda, Finance; Adolphe Muzito, Budget; Martin Kabwelulu, Mines; Victor Makwenge, Health; and Olivier Kamitatu, Plan.

¶6. (U) Gizenga must now present his program to the National Assembly for review and approval. Until that time, transitional ministers will continue to exercise their functions.

Non-Appointees

¶7. (U) Some prominent figures not among cabinet appointees include former Security Adviser Samba Kaputo, ex-Vice President Azarias Ruberwa, former Interior Minister Theophile Mbemba, and Former North Kivu Governor Eugene Serufuli. Noteworthy is that Ruberwa's RCD will not be a part of the new government.

Comment

18. (SBU) The appointments have put the spotlight on many relatively unknown figures, particularly from Gizenga's PALU.

Negotiations to form the cabinet were by all accounts complicated and contentious, and even with a very large cabinet of 60, there will inevitably be scores of disappointed office-seekers from Kabila's AMP coalition. Forthcoming announcements of Presidency staff and parastatal heads will therefore be all the more eagerly anticipated.

End comment.

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